

The use of the Department of Justice to target reporters who were asking embarrassing questions of the administration, in one case, with the threat of prosecution under the Espionage Act;

The warrantless seizure of the private records of millions of Americans by the National Security Agency;

The increasingly menacing militarization of domestic police agencies;

The shakedown of health care providers to fund advocacy and promotion of ObamaCare;

Frequent assertions by the President of authority to nullify laws that he deems objectionable or inconvenient, despite his clear constitutional mandate to see that the laws are faithfully executed;

The executive's usurpation of the legislative powers of Congress by using the regulatory bureaucracies to impose laws that the elected Congress has specifically refused to enact;

Continued suggestions that the executive may order military operations against other governments without provocation and without congressional authorization.

This week, we are beginning to learn details of the so-called Federal Data Hub, including an excellent article by John Fund of the National Review. According to Fund:

The Department of Health and Human Services is about to hire an army of "patient navigators" to inform Americans about the subsidized insurance promised by ObamaCare and assist them in enrolling. These organizers will be guided by the new Federal Data Hub, which will give them access to reams of personal information compiled by Federal agencies, ranging from the IRS to the Department of Defense and the Veterans Administration.

Mr. Speaker, the American people are slowly beginning to realize the threat to individual freedom, personal privacy, and fundamental constitutional principles that these developments pose. Some very bright constitutional lines have been crossed. And my constituents keep asking: What is Congress going to do?

The House has taken the first steps to restore our constitutional checks and balances by focusing its investigatory attention on the unfolding IRS scandal. It is of critical importance that the facts of the case be fully laid out, those responsible identified and removed from positions of trust or authority, and safeguards enacted to ensure that this sort of abuse never happens again.

The House Rules Committee took an important step yesterday by allowing amendments to the Defense Appropriations Act to stop the warrantless seizure of Americans' phone and Internet records by the NSA and to reassert the essential principle with respect to Syria that Congress alone has the prerogative to declare war.

The House is in a position to resist many of these abuses and usurpations through its power to appropriate, but it has often been reluctant to fully assert that authority. The conventional wis-

dom is that the appropriations process will shortly stall and a continuing resolution will be agreed to. That would be a tragic mistake if it leads to the continued funding of these increasingly unconstitutional and authoritarian measures.

All appropriations must start in the House, which means that a simple majority of this body by itself could arrest many of these disturbing developments simply by marshalling the courage and determination to just say "no" by pulling the purse strings shut. If we fail to do so, I believe that we are allowing our Nation to drift dangerously toward a constitutional crisis with grave implications to the rule of law and to the survival of American liberty.

HONORING HABERSHAM ELECTRIC MEMBERSHIP CORPORATION

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. COLLINS) for 5 minutes.

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I come from the Ninth District of Georgia, where it's a pleasure to go back there to see the mountains and the rural nature of our district and also the many businesses that make up its economic engine, from agriculture to industries. They are the backbone of the Ninth District.

This morning, I rise to honor one of those backbones of our economic development, Habersham EMC, as it approaches an important milestone. This week, they mark the 75th anniversary of providing clean, reliable, affordable energy to homes and businesses in northeast Georgia.

The Habersham EMC serves Hall, Lumpkin, White, Stephens, and Rabun Counties, as well as its namesake, Habersham County. Habersham EMC is a member-owned cooperative that provides power to more than 33,000 members and maintains approximately 3,700 miles of line.

I had the pleasure of stopping by the Habersham EMC a few months ago to speak with the leadership of this great organization. Todd Pealock, his staff, and the board of directors are wonderful examples of servant leadership that provides an invaluable service to their community.

While I'm sorry to miss the 75th anniversary celebration, I want to extend my congratulations and best wishes to all the Habersham employees and members. I hope the next 75 years will bring even more innovation and continued success in providing the affordable energy needed to fuel our economy.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until noon today.

Accordingly (at 10 o'clock and 37 minutes a.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1200

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker at noon.

PRAYER

Dr. Shane Alexander, Northcrest Church of Christ, Mexia, Texas, offered the following prayer:

Lord, our Lord, how majestic is Your name in all the Earth. When we consider Your heavens, the work of Your fingers, who are we that You are mindful of us? What is this country that it might know Your blessings?

Yet You have blessed this land and this government for the people and by the people.

For these Representatives who exercise the people's will, may they be also representatives of Your will. May they speak their consciences and convictions and stand up for what they and their constituents believe.

But give them courage also to speak truth to power and to seek justice for the victims of violence, oppression, and poverty.

Please bless the proceedings of this legislative body today, that through them Your will might be exercised here on Earth as it is in Heaven.

May Your unfailing love be with us, Lord, now and forevermore. Amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER. The Chair has examined the Journal of the last day's proceedings and announces to the House his approval thereof.

Pursuant to clause 1, rule I, the Journal stands approved.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER. Will the gentleman from Nevada (Ms. TITUS) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Ms. TITUS led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

WELCOMING DR. SHANE ALEXANDER

The SPEAKER. Without objection, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. POE) is recognized for 1 minute.

There was no objection.

(Mr. POE of Texas asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, the United States House of Representatives